

REVIEWS

EMERGENCIES IN MEDICAL PRACTICE. Edited by C. Allan Birch, M.D., F.R.C.P. Fourth edition. (Pp. xii + 610; illustrations 143, nine in colour. 32s. 6d.) London: E. and S. Livingstone, 1954.

THE fact that this volume has now reached a fourth edition since it was first published in 1948 is alone convincing evidence of its popularity and usefulness.

Emergencies are absolute or relative, and fortunately the list of the former group is short. A well-known surgeon of a bygone generation used to teach that there were only two emergencies, hæmorrhage and obstruction of the upper air passages. If that dictum be accepted as correct by the reader he will not be surprised to find that the bulk of this book deals with the relative emergencies, in fact, with the treatment of much that he would class as acute illness and of complications arising in the course of illness.

The work is divided into sections, each written by an expert on his subject. The editor himself has written several sections, including those on acute poisoning, the hazards of medical procedures, respiratory emergencies, medico-legal and non-clinical emergencies. He also contributes an excellent section, with numerous illustrations, on practical procedures.

Other sections deal with medical emergencies in each of the body systems, with emergencies at sea, in the air, in industry and in the post-operative state. This arrangement makes for easy reference, and in addition there is a good index.

Though concerned mainly with treatment, there are many useful hints in differential diagnosis and not a few sound aphorisms.

This book should prove a "very present help in trouble" to every doctor having direct care of patients, whether consulting physician or surgeon, resident medical officer or general practitioner.

W. G. F.

AIDS TO HISTOLOGY. By Geoffrey H. Bourne, D.Phil., D.Sc. Sixth edition. (Pp. viii + 162; figs. 59. 6s.) London: Ballière, Tindall & Cox, 1954.

It is especially difficult to present such a subject as histology in the confines of a small volume and with only a few simple line diagrams. This is not an adequate text-book of histology even for the medical student, but the student using it throughout his course will probably have clearer ideas on the basic facts of histology than if he attempts to find his way through some of the larger text-books often recommended to him. However, he should supplement it by the study of selected portions of a larger text as well as his practical study.

The new style of binding now adopted for this series is an undoubted improvement and the type is clear and easily read.

J. E. M.

MAY AND WORTH'S MANUAL OF DISEASES OF THE EYE. By T. Keith Luca, C.B.E., M.A., M.D., M.Chir.(Cantab.), and A. G. Cross, M.A., M.D.(Cantab.), F.R.C.S. Eleventh edition. (Pp. xii + 724; figs. 305, plates 32. 5s.) London: Ballière, Tindall & Cox, 1954.

THIS has been a very popular book for undergraduates for over half a century. T. Keith Lyle and A. G. Cross are the editors of this eleventh edition.

Extensive alterations have been made, new chapters written and methods of treatment brought up to date. The book is very well illustrated and excellent coloured pictures are an important feature. For general practitioners this edition will be an excellent reference work, but for undergraduate students it is too large. It is a pity that when so much valuable new information was added, severe pruning of old ideas and methods was not carried out at the same time. This could be done comparatively easily and the book would then be better balanced, and of a more readable size for undergraduates.

J. R. W.